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45. 341.





**KILDA'S BRIDAL,**

**AND**

**OTHER POEMS.**

EDINBURGH: PRINTED BY BALLANTYNE AND HUGHES,  
PAUL'S WALK, CANONGATE.

# KILDA'S BRIDAL

A TALE OF THE WESTERN ISLES,

AND

OTHER POEMS.

BY

SAMUEL GASQUOINE.

LONDON:

DAVID BOGUE, FLEET STREET.

MDCCCXLV.



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SAMUEL JOHNSON

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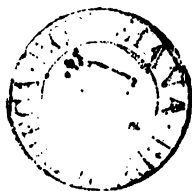
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## PREFACE.

---

It is said of the poet Shelley, that when a student at Oxford, he would often, in passing, linger near some small piece of water, and watch with intense anxiety the fortune of little paper craft, which he would form from the covers of old letters, sometimes even from his most esteemed correspondence, and then commit to the mercy of the winds and the waves upon his miniature mere. Somewhat akin to the deep interest he felt in the progress of his frail flotilla, is the feeling with which this little volume is watched, as it is now cast upon the tide of public opinion.

The scene of the poem is laid in the Hebrides, or Western Islands of Scotland, chiefly in that of St Kilda, at once the most northerly and most westerly of all; in Ulva; and some little at Aros, in the island of Mull. Several of the incidents in the last Canto are founded upon two different Scottish traditions.

As regards the few miscellaneous poems, nothing need be said. They are strictly what they profess to be—miscellaneous: no particular arrangement being observed. This was the more unnecessary, as the author hopes to make other additions to this small collection.

Finally—should any faults be discovered which have escaped his own eye, as doubtless many will, he trusts they will meet with some little forbearance, in consideration of its being his first work.

*April, 1845.*

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# KILDA'S BRIDAL.

## CANTO FIRST.



# KILDA'S BRIDAL,

---

## CANTO FIRST.

### I.

Go pace yon cliff, and from its hoary peak,  
Mark far below the gaily dancing wave—  
Illum'd by one bright beam, there sent to seek  
Who sleeps beneath—that sunlit surge his grave :  
Yet once again, O see it reach yon cave,  
Its golden gladness and its glory gone ;  
And hear it wail, as though it loved to lave  
The land with its own melancholy moan,  
Like Sorrow's latest sigh, when Hope's sunlight has flown.



Through storm's black curtain flung across the sky,  
Hast ever mark'd one little restless ray  
Pierce through the gloom, through mystic shadows fly,  
Panting to strike the darkness into day?  
How vain, alas! like infancy at play,  
Now glancing brightly, now its glory fled  
One moment, to return the next as gay;  
But see, its doom yet once again is said—  
Blest beam, return to heav'n, for all on earth is dead.

What emblems these of that lone spirit's woe,  
Which clings still fondly to the ruin'd shrine  
Where Hope's blest incense long has ceased to flow,  
And Hope's dear sun long since has ceased to shine!  
See yon pale votary kneel, and hear her pine,  
As now she breathes her spirit's wildest fear;  
And hark! there peals a chord<sup>1</sup>—O blessed sign!  
How sweet the peal to that distracted ear—  
“O there's a future joy for ev'ry present tear.”

## II.

“ Was that a sound, a voice from heav’n,  
Is then my unbelief forgiven ? ”

Shriek’d Leila, Maid of Clare :

Upward she turn’d her tearful eyes,  
Then gazed around in wild surprise,  
But still stood weeping there.

“ Some gentle whisper did I hear ;  
Or some unearthly burst of fear ;  
Or was it but the sea’s wild lyre,  
Swept by the winds in vengeful ire ;  
Or in my passion’s fitful trance,  
Do I behold illusions dance ? ”  
So rudely rack’d with mental pain,  
She scarce could trust her burning brain.  
Again she cried—“ I know, I know ”—  
For utterance must be given to woe,  
“ ’Twas but some spirit of the deep,  
Bewailing that a maid should weep ;

Or the dark rush of yonder wave,  
That maddens o'er the seaman's grave,  
To warn the bark it cannot save."

"That distant peal, whate'er it be—  
Come it from heav'n, or earth, or sea,  
What 'vails it to a maid like me!  
The soul, when shatter'd and bereft  
Of hope, and all that love had left  
Of human joy, is but a shrine  
Round which no soft affections twine;  
A thing of life doom'd still to live,  
Though dead to all that life can give :  
Be what it may, it bursts the spell  
Of this lone heart, and rings its knell,  
Its last—O yes, it speaks my doom,  
To bear it broken to the tomb—  
O life, O love—farewell—farewell!"

## III.

She spoke, and sunk upon the ground;  
Then rose, and gave one fearful bound;  
“But lo! what arm detains me here?”  
She cried, and saw her minstrel near;  
His faithful steps had hover'd nigh,  
His aged eyes were yet scarce dry,  
And when he mark'd the fatal leap,  
Shudd'ring with fear he ceased to weep,  
And sprung his charge to save.  
O, how would one bold chieftain bless  
The hand which in such awful hour  
Had linger'd in its tenderness,  
And snatch'd her from Despair's wild pow'r,  
And from a rueful grave!

## IV.

His fingers o'er the harp he flings,  
And sweeps across its airy strings,  
That harp she loved to hear:

But now those thrilling notes are dead,  
Alike their pow'r and pathos fled,  
Though once to her so dear.

## v.

“ Cease, minstrel, cease! thy softest strain  
Can never soothe this spirit's pain;  
Go—stand on yonder rifted rock,  
And bid the billows backward roll;  
Till then, such anguish cease to mock,  
As harrows this despairing soul!  
Channels too deep for mortal eye,  
Lie veil'd in hidden mystery,  
Where onward rolls, dark, dark, and wide,  
The course of sorrow's silent tide.—  
This torrent nearly found a tomb  
In that impenetrable gloom,  
And though thou'st stemm'd the waves of woe,  
Thou can'st not bid them cease to flow;

Flow ever on—they must—they will,  
Till channels burst that cannot fill ;  
To human hand 'twas never giv'n,  
To heal the spirit doom'd by heav'n !”

## .VI.

The minstrel sank upon his knees,  
And in that fair and fragile form,  
Such inward throbs of anguish sees,  
As tell how dire the inward storm.  
Fain would he weep, that man of years,  
But his grief lay too deep for tears ;  
Fain would he speak—but where, O where,  
Find words to tranquillize Despair !

## VII.

If aught would tempt a bright spirit of bliss  
To stoop from its throne on high,  
O would it not be such a scene as this,  
And such a lone maiden's sigh ?

O, how would it bend on its wings of light,  
And hover so gently there,  
Where a maiden, e'en lovely to angel's sight,  
Was breathing her heart-broken pray'r!

## VIII.

Now pale and speechless Leila stood,  
Wishing her sleep were 'neath the flood;  
Feeling, that drain'd the last hot tear,  
She had no other curse to fear;  
Looking as 'twere the very last,  
As e'en her hour already past,  
Her broken spirit would linger o'er  
Scenes where it never might linger more,  
Would fondly cling till the last dim ray  
Of light had burst, and melted away.  
For O the spot was hallow'd ground,  
And hallow'd was the ocean's sound,  
Where she had knelt, and kneeling pray'd,  
And wept o'er hopes so long delay'd;

Where she had linger'd long to mark  
Each snowy sail that wafted near,  
Hoping at last to hail the bark  
As her own precious life-blood dear.

## IX.

But hearken—was that a spirit's wail  
Whispering soft in the gentle gale?  
O no, for such sounds could ne'er have birth,  
Save in the breast of a child of earth—  
“Farewell for ever thou lonely rock.  
Heart! can'st thou bear such a cruel shock?  
Beat, beat as thou wilt—alas! can'st thou feel?  
Or art thou as cold and as hard as steel?  
Yes! bear it I will—for it ne'er can ache—  
No, never again for a mortal's sake;  
In the light of my youth I've spent my last hour,  
Now welcome Despair, for I'm dead to thy pow'r!”

She spoke, and again as the gale swept by,  
You might hear one deep, one heart-broken sigh,



As though 'twere the last that she ever could heave,  
That burst in its darkness her bosom to leave.  
Ah ! little she thought that the favouring gale  
Was even then swelling her chieftain's sail.

## X.

The minstrel rose with trembling awe,  
Scarce knowing what he felt or saw ;  
Then flinging back his silver hair,  
His brow told many a tale of care  
Which his dear harp in earlier days  
Had sooth'd with its rejoicing lays ;  
And hark ! he fain would strike it now,  
Perchance to soothe a fairer brow.

## SONG.

O ever in this wide world of ours,  
The thorns will grow on the fairest flow'rs ;  
And he that would pluck the thorns away,  
Will find that the flowers must soon decay.

So gladness and grief in mortal's eye,  
May strangely blend the smile and the sigh ;  
But he that would dash away the tear  
Will find that the smile's not half so dear.

## XI.

O Leila ! who can tell the ray  
That o'er thy features seem'd to play !  
Who but the maid that feels the pow'r  
Of music in life's darkest hour—  
Can tell the dear enchanting spell  
Upon thine inmost soul that fell ;  
Like sunshine piercing through the shade,  
If such a cell could ever be,  
Where light before had seem'd to fade  
Into the gloom mysteriously.

## XII.

“ Forgive ”—she cried—“ that in such hour,  
A maid defied a minstrel's pow'r ;

Yet O how small thy simple sway

To calm the chaos of the soul,

Feeble as twilight's latest ray

Backward again the shades to roll !

Still, dear the light, whate'er it be,

My soul, that sheds one ray on thee,—

Though like the lamp on blighted ground,

That only shows the dearth around.

“ But hark !—what signal did I hear ?

Speaks it to me of joy or fear ?

See where the moon sleeps on yon wave,—

See where it lights that dismal cave,—

There glides a sail—again, O hark !

It comes from yonder moonlit bark,—

And now a song of gladsome glee,

O heav'n ! can this be meant for me !

Those strains I know—and on its prow

I see !—O yes—I see him now”—

Instant upon her knees she fell,

And clasp'd her hands in transport there,

Inspir'd must be the tongue to tell  
The thrilling pathos of that pray'r.

## XIII.

What bugle-blast floats on the gale?  
Go bid that maiden tell the tale!  
And O what form stoops o'er her now?  
Who shed the tear that wets her brow?  
While sweetly shone the pale moonbeam,  
Which made her more an angel seem,  
She started from her spirit's dream—  
“ 'Tis he!—'Tis he!”—no more she said,  
The chieftain raised her drooping head;  
She fondly smiled, and on his breast  
Leaning, her silence spoke the rest.

## XIV.

De Grahame! in thy manly eye  
The big round tear hung tremblingly;  
It fell, to sparkle there no more,  
And stray'd her gentle bosom o'er.

O Leila ! as it trickled there,  
What were thy feelings ! what thy pray'r !—  
For him whose tears were falling now  
Fast, fast, upon thy beaming brow ;  
Who stoop'd as o'er a lovely flow'r,  
To brush the dews of morning's hour,  
Those dews which dimm'd it for a while,  
To heighten, not to mar its smile ?

## XV.

'Twas thus they linger'd, thus they stood,  
Beneath them roll'd the tranquil flood,  
Above them shone the mild moonlight,  
While all around was hush'd in night.  
O mortal ! where thy boasted pow'r,  
To tell the tale of such an hour ?  
Go feel—go taste one hour of bliss—  
Then come and tell the joy of this !  
E'en Nature's pow'rs were sunk in sleep,  
As if to hallow such a scene,

For in that slumber still and deep,  
No playful zephyr stirr'd between.  
Those worlds of light, far, far on high,  
That sparkled in the azure sky,  
Were mirror'd in the deep, as though,  
Rock'd by the ocean's ceaseless flow,  
There glow'd a world as bright below.

## XVI.

See Leila lifts her tearful eye,  
And gently asks that chieftain why  
His bark so long,—she heav'd a sigh,  
O all too blest, too happy now,  
She could not tell that tale of woe,  
Which late had rack'd her anxious brow,  
So lovely now in beauty's glow!  
Again De Grahame fondly press'd  
The maiden to his throbbing breast,  
He dash'd the starting tear away,  
And gently whisper'd—"Leila, nay,

Ask not,—far spent this lovely hour,  
We must repair to yonder tow'r,  
Which, while it was a home for thee,  
Was beacon to my bark at sea :  
My trusty followers all are there,  
Who came their chieftain's fate to share.  
When gay the morrow's sun shall rise,  
I'll tell thee all,—but 'gainst surprise  
Meantime we must set watchful guard,  
So on this rock I'll leave a ward.

## XVII.

The morrow's sun had risen now,  
Serenely calm was Nature's brow ;  
And Leila, in its dazzling glare,  
Seem'd still more beauteous, and more fair,—  
So thought at least that chieftain then,  
Restor'd to love and her again.  
—“ But where's the abbot ?—where's the page ? ”—  
He cried, and scarce could cool his rage,

For o'er his mind that moment flash'd  
The truth, and there he stood abash'd—  
In anxious silence muttering o'er  
Few hasty words,—then stood no more ;  
But gazing on that maiden still

With look of thrilling tenderness,  
He felt the tear his eyelid fill,

And fondly kiss'd her forehead's tress.  
While sweetly blush'd the lovely maid,  
Her hand in his he gently laid,  
And told at last why he had been

So long away from one so dear,  
What he had heard—what he had seen,  
And what was now his spirit's fear.—

## XVIII.

“ Leila ! while on this lonely shore,  
Defended by the breaker's roar,  
Thou'st linger'd many a dreary day,  
And never ceas'd to weep and pray  
For him so long, so far away,



Thou little, little know'st the broil  
That 's ravag'd o'er thy native soil ;  
And think not that this haughty crest,  
    Was absent for one moment there,  
Nor think a chieftain's sword could rest,  
    While insult swell'd the very air.

## . XIX.

“ Soon dawn'd the fearful battle day,  
And had'st thou seen in high array  
Those lists in deadly feud opposed,  
And seen them as in fight they closed,—  
Not tearless would have been thine eye ;  
Nor, maiden, need I tell thee why :  
    'Twould make indeed  
    Thy bosom bleed  
Again,—yet must I bid thee know—  
Thy father was that chieftain's foe :  
And O when stood a parent here,  
    Against a lover marshall'd there,

What must have been thy fatal fear !  
And what, O what thy dark despair !

## XX.

“ When from the earth the shadows broke,  
On march'd the lines, elate with hope ;  
But O, when full exposed to view,  
The victory, all too truly knew ;  
O'ermatch'd by numbers, this proud plume  
Already saw, and felt its doom ;  
Then wherefore need I linger o'er  
The fate of him that plume who bore,—  
E'en he himself was captive ta'en ;  
O judge a chieftain's spirit's pain,  
So early forced the knee to bow,  
And kneeling yield the captive's vow.

## XXI.

“ But when we reach'd the castle gate  
That overlooks the foaming flood,

Think, think how swell'd thy father's hate—

For ere he had one moment stood,

His frighten'd vassals flew, and said—

His daughter from his halls had fled.

At once on me suspicion fell,

Though none the secret dared to tell ;

Yet as the gates that evening jarr'd,

Methought I heard them doubly barr'd.”

—A moment here the chieftain ceased,

The maiden felt his pulse increased,

And almost trembling, wonder'd why

So fix'd, so motionless his eye—

—“ De Grahame ! tell me—speak !—O speak !—

What means that flush upon thy cheek ? ”

—“ Leila ! forgive—O 'tis not fear

That brought it glowing there,

For one so precious, one so dear,

All danger will I dare ;

But, far away on yonder sea,

A distant speck I dimly see ; ”

Then turning to a warder there,  
He bade him to that rock repair—  
“ What it may be, I cannot tell ;  
Go mark and watch its progress well.”  
Then gazing on the anxious maid,  
His cautious mandate now obey'd—  
“ Perhaps 'tis but some passing sail,”  
He said, and then resumed his tale.—

## XXII.

“ Day after day thy sire, O'Clare,  
Kept me a haughty captive there ;  
Yet as each hour successive roll'd,  
He little thought that I was told—  
What all his vassals so loudly swore,  
Had woo'd his child from her native shore—  
How that a swift and lordly bark  
Had borne her o'er the ocean dark,  
Mann'd by a bold, and faithful crew,  
Each, all, De Grahame's followers true,

To some far clime of beauty, where  
Himself would quickly meet her there.

## XXIII.

“ But still he waver'd, still in doubt,  
Enraged he ever paced about ;  
And oft Lord Durie's step I heard,  
And often caught his hasty word,  
As with thy sire in converse low  
He spoke what others might not know—

How a strong fleet at rest that lay,  
Ready his signal to obey,  
Might track thy bark's tempestuous way ;  
While I, his kinsman and his heir,  
Was close detain'd a captive there :  
How he might lead again to land  
All penitent this lovely hand,—  
This hand, which ere ten years had shed  
Their glories on thy youthful head,

Thy haughty sire so rashly swore  
Should be Lord Durie's ere ten more  
Had roll'd his gentle Leila o'er.

## XXIV.

“ At once my youthful page in haste  
Away I sent across the main,  
And bade him not a moment waste,  
But fly these smiling shores to gain ;  
And quickly these old tow'rs prepare  
For mirth, and lordly bridal there :—  
But now the deep, dark truth I see,  
As was his lord—a pris'ner he ;  
The page, thy father has detain'd,  
Betray'd by the light garb he wore,  
He took him ere the bark he gain'd,  
And seized the mandates that he bore ;  
Full well I see—full well I know  
The import of that savage look  
Which even then I scarce could brook,  
And scarce refrain'd to lay him low—

To force him e'en in his own tow'r,  
Again to own De Grahame's pow'r;  
'Twas only that he was thy sire  
Restrain'd—but not subdued my ire.

## XXV.

“ At length a vassal of mine own,  
Who trembled for his chieftain's fate,  
Ventured, alike unseen, unknown,  
One morn to pass thy father's gate;—  
And O he said 'twas all he knew,  
That he had heard Lord Durie say—  
Fix'd was the hour, and fix'd the day,  
When he with all his waiting crew  
Would sail to seize thee as his prey;  
And that De Grahame well would rue  
That e'er his bark bore thee away.  
Instant!—though captive still, I swore—  
That very day I'd flee the shore;

O yes, I bade that vassal go—

Prepare our little fearless fleet,  
And ere the morrow's sun should glow,  
Their chieftain would his followers meet;  
And wafted away by the western gale,  
For a happier home would quickly sail.

## XXVI.

“ Thy sire in sullen silence stood,  
Deep in a thoughtful angry mood,  
When yester-morn in simple guise  
Of peasant, I escaped his eyes.  
But such a garb is little meet  
For chieftain on a charger fleet,  
So once escaped his castle gate,  
The peasant strode with haughtier gait.  
Quickly our little fleet was mann'd,  
As quickly as my flight was plann'd;  
And lightly seem'd our sails to play  
While wafted o'er the lovely bay,



As though the very gales conspired  
To grant the boon those sails desired.  
Despite awhile the billows' roar,  
That eve we reach'd this happy shore,  
And we—e'en we again were blest,  
O Leila! well thou know'st the rest."

## XXVII.

He spoke—but mark'd a bursting tear  
Steal down her gentle glowing cheek;  
Quickly he kiss'd away her fear,  
Nor called nor thought the maiden weak.  
"A moment I will leave thee now,  
For the beacon upon the mountain's brow;  
For there can I well and clearly mark—  
How fares it with yonder distant bark."

## XXVIII.

Scarce had a moment pass'd away,  
Scarce had the sunbeam ceased to play  
Upon those turrets old and gray,

When back into the lordly hall  
De Grahame rush'd—the warder's call—  
To each—to all—"prepare to arm,"  
Now flew to give the loud alarm.  
—"See—Leila, see thy sire O'Clare—  
And all his valiant spearmen there;  
Too well—O yes!—too well I knew,  
His captive's track he'd quick pursue."  
—"Where must we fly?—O chieftain, where?"—  
The maiden scream'd in wild despair,  
"O haste!—his fleet is wafting near,  
We must not, cannot linger here;—  
No, not his daughter's latest pray'r  
Will force him thy dear life to spare!  
Oh! by that life—and by these tears—  
And by the dark and deadly fears  
That wring thy Leila's wretched breast—  
I pray thee not a moment rest;  
Together yon billows we'll venture o'er,  
For dear if with thee is the ocean's roar!"

## XXIX.

A moment's fear his forehead flush'd,  
A moment—and that fear was hush'd—  
“ O quickly man our little fleet,”  
He cried, and from their chieftain's feet  
His followers sprang to where the wave  
Now madly rock'd their barks at rest ;  
Through danger's hour resolved to brave,  
For that's the hour they loved the best.  
Then turning to his Leila, spoke,  
Who trembling stood as just awoke  
From some deep momentary trance  
That seem'd across her soul to glance—  
“ O long ere thy sire has reach'd the shore,  
Will evening fling her mantle o'er ;  
Then when on the waves the moonbeams smile,  
We'll sail away for St Kilda's Isle :  
These spirits are link'd, are knit together,  
By ties which no human pow'r can sever.

And the old Abbot shall soon prepare  
To link these hands on the altar there :  
In that lone isle away on the main,  
No grief shall wound thy spirit again ;  
There naught but the gale that sweeps its shore,  
Ling'ring when tempests are hush'd and o'er,  
Shall break the dream of thy peaceful breast,  
Then playfully rock thee again to rest ;—  
There wash'd by the surge of the western sea,  
I'll live to love, and I'll live to thee !”



# KILDA'S BRIDAL.

CANTO SECOND.



# KILDA'S BRIDAL.

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## CANTO SECOND.

### I.

ISLES of the West! how deep the spell  
That hangs around their lovely shores;  
O, there's a charm in every dell,  
And in each billow as it roars;  
There's music in each gale that wakes,  
To waft the islesman to his land;  
There's music in each wave that breaks  
Upon their lone and lovely strand.  
Where is the soul can coldly gaze  
Upon their deep and swelling tide,



While memory tells of other days,  
Without a throb of manly pride?

## II.

Isles of the West ! whose rugged shore  
Defies the wild Atlantic's roar,  
Whose mighty peaks in triumph rise  
To brave the terrors of the skies,  
And still through ages proudly rest,  
Unscath'd upon the ocean's breast ;  
Whose circling mists still love to fold  
Their mantle round a clime so bold,<sup>2</sup>  
Like laurel wreath on victor's brow,  
Pledge of a soul that scorns to bow—  
No Royal Wand'rer on thy seas,<sup>3</sup>  
Is wafted by the western breeze ;  
Again no prince of Stuart race  
Seeks on thy shores a resting-place ;  
Nor can those shores now boast the name  
Link'd with that prince's hapless fame.<sup>4</sup>

Now, at St Mary's holy well,<sup>s</sup>  
No pilgrim lingers there to tell,  
How once a royal stranger knelt,  
And to a blushing maiden dealt  
The sparkling draught he would not sip  
Till it had lav'd that maiden's lip.  
Benbecula! upon thy strand,  
No royal shallop flies to land,  
Though now a bark is tossing near  
The isle that still'd a prince's fear—  
A chieftain's bark—yet shuns the shore,  
For O, its perils are not o'er,  
Not there its shelter, nor its home,  
It yet must brave the billow's foam ;  
Not on thy cliffs there smiles the tow'r  
That chieftain seeks in peril's hour ;  
Its prow still points across the sea,  
To climes more distant, not more free.

## III.

But ah ! who mans that fragile bark,  
On such a night, so chill, so dark !  
What chieftain that ?—what gentle maid,  
Who fondly clings to him for aid ?  
Who ?—whence are they that dare to urge  
Their course through each impending surge ?  
O ! rather ask, what hour so dread,—  
What way so dark, where'er it led,  
That love would not delight to dare,  
And long to prove its fondness there ?

## IV.

Sweep on, sweep on then while ye may,  
Though rudest gales may track the way ;  
And though each big upheaving wave  
Seem but a deep and yawning grave,  
Fear not, for they shall bear you on,  
Till storms be hush'd, and tempests gone.

Fear not, but think each billow's foam  
Rolls onward to a happier home ;  
Perchance some smiling Eden, where  
Joy never saddens into care.  
Sweep gaily on, and let each tear,  
Each word, each look, be doubly dear ;  
Sweep on, though angry tempests lower,  
Ye soon must face a darker hour.

## V.

Three days had roll'd their course along  
In those rude halls, uncheer'd by song,  
Where late a chieftain almost wept  
For very joy their light to see,  
Where late a maid her vigils kept  
In silence so despairingly.  
Now echo'd there far other sounds  
Of warders pacing well their rounds,  
And vassals in that castle yard,  
By night and day alike to guard

Both sea and land was their employ,  
Instead of revelry and joy.

## VI.

'Tis morn, and at yon watch-tower's height,  
No longer gleams the warning light ;  
All, all is hush'd, save where below  
The breaker thwarts the ocean's flow ;  
All, all is bright, as though the hand  
Of sin had never marr'd that land ;—  
While only he, the proud O'Clare  
Seems still to frown in anger there.  
But see !—what sudden start he makes,  
And hark !—what sound the silence breaks—  
“ Perchance may be the distant tramp  
Of steeds that bear my erring child ”—  
He cried, and dash'd away the damp  
Stray drops from eyes that once were mild.  
It comes,—it comes,—no palfrey white,  
No erring daughter greets his sight,

'Tis but a courtier of his own,  
Who with a high and haughty tone,  
Now proffers to his feudal lord  
Some message, but ne'er speaks a word.

## VII,

He scann'd it hurriedly. "Beware—  
The bird has fled the fowler's snare."  
Then waving to his vassal band,  
Like one whose glance was his command,  
Speechless he paced with them along,  
The haughtiest of that haughty throng.  
And now those halls are dark and dim,  
And cheerless as the heart of him  
Who far on yonder stirless tide,  
Floats foremost in his pomp and pride.

## VIII.

Thus fled the tardy time—meanwhile,  
The bark had reach'd St Kilda's Isle;

The bark that in a stormier hour,  
When fate and fortune seem'd to lower,  
Had sail'd unheeded, or unseen,  
As though some fisher's it had been.  
And now St Kilda's halls are gay,  
Ringing to many a lively lay,  
While merry minstrels join their song,  
To while the happy hours along,—  
Till he, the aged Abbot, swore  
He ne'er saw joy like that before.

## IX.

'Tis midnight,—and when softest sleep  
Is sinking slow on other eyes ;  
When many a mourner wakes to weep,  
Or soothe his dreaming spirit's sighs ;  
When visions dance before the breast  
Whose sorrows now are rock'd to rest ;  
When earth itself is wrapt in gloom,  
Shrouded in silence like the tomb,—

A merry peal from Kilda's tower  
Welcomes a bright and bridal band,  
While maidens deck'd with many a flower,  
Before yon midnight altar stand :  
And list ! the anthem's silver sound  
Is stealing through the ancient aisles,  
While tapers fling their light around,  
Aiding the moonbeam in its smiles.

## X.

'Tis hush'd, and one sweet voice is heard  
Falt'ring affection's fondest word,  
While one stray tear is seen to start  
From eyes undimm'd by cruel care,  
A tear that sprung from beauty's heart,  
Telling the love that kindled there ;  
And now a voice of manlier tone,  
At last calls her he loves his own,  
While Leila kneels at his dear side,  
Swearing to be a chieftain's bride.



## XI.

Morn gently breaks as all is done,  
And they who love are link'd in one,  
Only the Abbot's trembling breath  
Still faintly echoes "love till death,"—  
When hark!—the splash of hasty oars  
Startles those soft and smiling shores;  
A signal gun! again—again,  
A deep, a breathless pause, and then  
One wild burst fills the heated air,  
Yet only one stands trembling there.

## XII.

"To arms, to arms,—we'll never fall  
Thus tamely,"—at his haughty call  
Each faithful follower bares his brand,  
Wielded by no unwary hand;  
Then leading Leila, now his bride,  
Away with all a chieftain's pride,

He lightly whisper'd, " Why bedim  
Those soft and gentle eyes for me ?  
Weep not, but watch the fate of him  
Who lives or dies this day for thee."—

" Weep not !—O tell that restless ray  
Upon the waters cease to shine,  
Rather than dash the tears away  
Of her whose life is link'd with thine.  
Ah yes ! if tears could melt the soul  
Of him whose bark so fleetly flies  
Where scarce a ripple seems to roll—  
If e'en his daughter's latest sighs  
Could win forgiveness here below,  
Those tears, alas ! should ever flow :—  
O would he bless the sacred tie  
That links these hearts so lately riven,  
What joy ! what bliss ! what ecstasy !  
To hear him call us both forgiven.

But no—'twill never, never be,  
And thou, e'en thou art lost to me ;—  
These tears, these prayers are all in vain,  
We part—but not to meet again."

## XIII.

Was that a tinge of anger cast  
Its shade across De Grahame's brow ?  
Or but a fear that lightly pass'd,  
Mattering little why or how ?  
No anger there, no feeble fear,  
But thoughts that burn'd too deeply dear ;  
Thoughts whose impassion'd, heaving swell,  
No mortal tongue can ever tell ;  
Thoughts which can find no sweet allay  
In the hopes cherish'd yesterday ;  
Thoughts which look'd forward to a morrow  
Perchance of deeper, darker sorrow.

## XIV.

“ O, haste to some far happier shore,”—

She cried, “ nor think again of me,  
And when this fearful cloud is o’er,

I’ll weep and pray for none but thee :  
What recks it, if this doating heart  
Should break, or live to other years ;—  
What recks it, though it feel the smart  
Of blighted love, and hopeless tears ;—

Its life will still be more than blest,  
Far more, if thine be but at rest.  
He comes !—he comes !—’twill be too late,—  
Another moment seals thy fate ;  
Away !—O brave all danger rather  
Than dare to face an angry father ;  
Fly, fly,—for this fond heart of mine  
May bleed before he’ll pardon thine,—  
Farewell !—farewell ”—

“ Nay, dearest, never  
Shall aught on earth thus rudely sever

Hearts that have loved so well as ours ;  
Yes, loved through danger's darkest hours.  
O Leila, still thee, weep not then,  
    This morn will soon be past and o'er,  
And we may fondly meet again,  
    To love e'en dearer than before ;—  
Farewell awhile"—one wild embrace,  
    One long, one last convulsive kiss,  
Like that which memory loves to trace  
    In after years of calmer bliss,—  
And he is gone, and she is left,  
Like a lorn thing of hope bereft,  
With claspèd hand, and streaming eye,  
Watching from yonder lattice high,  
The fortune of that fearful day  
Which sweeps her fondest hopes away.

## XV.

The chieftain now hath join'd his band ;  
O'Clare hath gain'd the lonely land,

And resting near his lordly skiff,  
Moor'd safely on the silent beach,  
He sees his foes on yonder cliff  
Stand far beyond his hostile reach.  
But hark ! a signal swells the air,  
And the proud plume of Lord O'Clare  
Flies onward to the bold attack,  
With many a warrior in his track ;  
But see,—O see !—they falter now,  
Some o'er the deep entangled bough,  
And some o'er slaughter'd men ;  
Thus each but rushes to his fall,  
Till, rallying at their leader's call,  
They onward press again :  
And now they gain a frowning peak,  
And seem some other path to seek,  
Away from human sight !  
Some ancient way, unknown, unseen,  
Where mortal foot had rarely been  
To scale its dizzy height.

Thus on they wend their fearless way,  
In broken but in bold array,  
And little think that many a snare  
Lay well conceal'd in ambush there.

## XVI.

On, on, De Grahame,—onward now,  
Or yield, for ever yield to him  
Who swears to make thee basely bow,  
Or prove thy prowess limb to limb.—  
They rush like torrent's mighty force,  
When Nature's channels seem to burst,  
Headlong o'er many a weary corse,  
That fell before it faced the worst.  
And now they struggle man to man,  
Each desp'rate till his foe began  
To reel beneath the deadly blow,  
Too truly aim'd to strike him low ;  
Till many a dim and dreary eye,  
That smil'd to see the daylight breaking,

Has lain for ever down to die,  
To sleep the sleep that knows no waking.

## XVII.

But where is bold De Grahame now ?  
O, is he stretch'd upon the strand,  
With pulseless heart, and bleeding brow,  
A refuge for the drifting sand ?  
Or sleeps he calmly where the wave  
Is rippling o'er his lifeless breast,  
Where e'en the waters lightly lave  
The bosom in its dreamless rest ?  
Yes, when O'Clare in triumph stood,  
Ere from the fatal feud he fled,  
That morn he left by yonder flood  
His foeman, and he thought him dead.  
But no, not such his hapless doom,  
Though still he seems to pant for breath,  
Not such his wide and watery tomb,  
Nor such at last his dreary death ;



For see, his followers, faithful still,

Now raise him bleeding where the tide

Has softly ebb'd, and bear him till

They reach their faithful vessel's side.

We leave the chieftain in that bark,

Wide drifting o'er the dark'ning sea,

And pause yet once again to mark,

Leila, the fate that follows thee.

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# **KILDA'S BRIDAL.**

**CANTO THIRD.**



# KILDA'S BRIDAL.

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## CANTO THIRD.

### I.

Few summers had fled in St Kilda's Isle,  
And gilded the tide with their azure smile,  
When all that had been was a thing forgot,  
Save when at the hearth of the fisher's cot,  
The lover would often at twilight tell  
How a maiden loved, and a chieftain fell.  
Yet still there was one in whose faithful breast  
The thoughts of the past could never find rest;  
Still one who pined in a convent's shade,  
As the fairest flower may soonest fade ;

Still one whose life was a cheerless scene,  
A dreary cloud with no sun between.

## II.

So the years roll'd away, and the western main  
Was glittering beneath the moonlight again,  
When a bark was becalm'd in the sleepy sea,  
Or was furrowing the waters drearily ;  
But why such a calm on the lordly deck ?  
Spy they in the distance a weary wreck ?  
O no ! but they list to the sweetest note  
That the air could waft, or the waters float ;  
And see how they smile as they hearken again  
To the soft melody of the ocean strain,  
How they linger and listen all free from care,  
Save one, and that one was the Lord O'Clare :  
For though he was far from the island shore,  
Where he sought in his age to land once more,  
Yet memory waken'd the trembling tear,  
When it told of the scenes of a bygone year ;

When it seem'd to say  
As it died away—  
That the music might be but the convent bell,<sup>6</sup>  
As it deepen'd the dirge of his Leila's knell.

## III.

A few more hours, and the western gale  
Was swelling again their idle sail ;  
A few more still, and their pennons gay  
Floated again in St Kilda's bay ;  
While a shallop so light that it almost flew  
O'er the beautiful wave like a frail canoe,  
Dash'd through the surge to the smiling strand,  
As though it fled to its fatherland.

## IV.

The sun was smiling merrily  
Over the land and o'er the sea,  
When a stranger pass'd the gate  
Of St Kilda's sacred wall,

With a quick and hurried gait  
Hasting to the convent hall,  
And he seems to gaze around,  
As he hears his lonely tread  
Echo with an awful sound,  
Where 'twas silent as the dead.  
But ah ! he stands in sadness now,  
And sighs that ever maiden's vow  
Should hide her light and loveliness  
Beneath a nun's devoted dress.  
But hark ! there's music steals along,  
Not like a sister's matin song ;  
Nor like the joyous notes which they  
Can raise who never went astray ;  
And see, the stranger turns aside,  
Nor seeks, nor wishes now to hide  
The tears so fastly following,  
As still he hears that maiden sing—

## V.

## SONG.

O see yon lovely aspen-tree,  
Now trembling in its pride,  
Its bright leaves dancing gracefully,  
As restless as the tide.

Dance gaily on a little while,  
A little while ye may,  
But O upon those leaves that smile  
Will soon forget to play !

Yes ! we shall see thee quickly die,  
Though now so young and fair,  
Nor weeping need I wonder why,  
A worm is eating there.

O see yon gentle trembling dove,  
It cannot tell its woe,  
Just lighted from its flight above,  
An arrow brought it low.



Each wing it presses to its side,  
As if with anxious care,  
Its quiv'ring, bleeding limb to hide,  
But O the wound is there !

So may a smile dance in the eye,  
Yet O, who cannot read,  
Though it conceal the bursting sigh,  
The bosom still may bleed ?

The wounded heart may feel too well  
The shaft is sinking deep,  
May feel, yet never, never tell,  
It soon will cease to weep.

To veil the grief that's brooding there,  
A treach'rous smile may wake,  
Awhile the heart its pang may bear,  
A little while—then break.'

## VI.

O, as those strains were softly pealing,  
Like angel notes across the flood,  
What throbbing thoughts were wildly stealing  
Across the breast of him who stood  
Lost in a trance-like dreaming there,  
Which scarce his heart could beat and bear !  
But see, he starts again to life,  
Despite his bosom's aching strife ;  
And as those silver echoes fall  
Serenely through the vaulted hall,  
He fleetly flies to a lonely cell,  
Where last he falter'd a long farewell,  
And lost, O lost in her dear embrace,  
He folds his Leila as once of yore,  
Kissing the tears from her angel face,  
Each fonder far than the one before.

## VII.

As fondness to a bleeding bird,  
So there's an hour when ev'ry word  
Of sympathy, though softly spoken,  
Darts anguish to the heart that's broken :  
And such an hour indeed was this  
To her whose only earthly bliss  
Was still to fling her weary gaze  
To earlier, and to happier days ;  
To many a soft and smiling scene,  
To what she was, and might have been :  
Whose only joy was still to fly  
In memory to joys gone by ;  
Whose only peace was still to be  
The plaything of her misery.

## VIII.

Few words were said, few glances given,  
For Leila yet had scarcely spoke,

Had scarcely raised her eyes to heav'n,  
When thus O'Clare the silence broke—  
“ O dearest daughter, weep not so,  
Though fortune's star may seem to wane ;  
Remember—waters ebb and flow,  
And stars that set may rise again ;—  
May rise beneath a softer sky  
Than that which saw their dark decline,  
And through the dearth of days gone by,  
May kindle with a kinder shine.  
O yes ! if sorrows fastly fly  
Across our path like clouds of care,—  
If shadows dim the summer sky,  
'Tis but because the sun is there.  
Then, Leila, weep, O weep no more,  
For e'en this very night we'll flee  
Away, away from this lone shore,  
Again across the smiling sea”——  
“ Nay, never, never !—say not so—  
For naught is left to love below,

Save only thee,—and though we part,  
I'll love thee with a broken heart ;—  
Yes, love thee better "—here her speech  
Falter'd, to let her tears beseech,  
Those pleading tears that well might win  
The hardest heart away from sin.

## IX.

But no—his fondness was not dead,  
Nor hard his heart, nor cold his love,  
For even now it almost bled,  
As pity with his purpose strove.  
But ah ! he bade that heart be still,  
Be subject to his wayward will ;  
That will which doom'd in bridal band,  
Lord Durie to his daughter's hand.  
A moment gazing thus he stood,  
First on his Leila, then the flood,  
For oft he turn'd his eyes away  
To watch the merry sunbeam play,

As if from such a sight, his breast  
Could snatch a moment's scanty rest :  
Then would he gaze again on her,  
Intently as a worshipper,  
And weep, and vainly wish that he  
Were young, and innocent as she.  
Thus did he turn, and turn again,  
And knew not how, or where, or when  
To break the solemn silence, till  
His weeping Leila ask'd his will.

## X.

" O, Aros halls are glad and gay,  
Haste then with me—away, away—  
For there Lord Durie waits to be  
All that a chieftain could to thee.  
O, be the past remember'd not,  
These tears and tremblings all forgot,  
And let, O let thy future bliss,  
Thy weal and woe, be link'd with his.

Haste then—and be his beauteous bride,  
And 'be once more a father's pride ;  
And when thou'rt smiling there again,  
A father's blessing thou shalt gain :—  
Refuse me—and this silver hair,  
Already blanch'd by cruel care,  
Shall whiten faster for the tomb,  
Than thou canst lose thy beauty's bloom ! ”

## XI.

O, where is the heart that ever knew  
The withering blight that fell  
On the soul, when affection's early dew  
Exhaled in the word—farewell !—  
Where, where is the breast that loved in vain,  
Like a lorn and lonely thing,  
That ever on earth could love again,  
As it did in its early spring !

## XII.

So Leila stood with beating brow,  
Careless of what befell her now,  
If only she might meet in heaven  
The one to whom her heart was given.—

“I go—I go—forgive that e’er  
My errors tinged thy brow with care;  
What heeds it if this bosom smart

With all that could its anguish move,  
I’ll give my hand, but not my heart,

My life,—but not, oh not my love!  
What heeds it if at last it break,  
’Twill but be for a father’s sake;

And since my hopes forever fell  
With him I loved, yes loved too well,  
E’en he whom I scorn shall now be mine,  
Not, not for his own sake, but for thine!”



## XIII.

'Tis night—and ev'ry star is gone,  
Though late they glitter'd in the wave ;  
And now a bark is floating on,  
Perchance o'er many a seaman's grave.  
But who stands there with weeping eye,  
Sweeping the surge so wistfully ?  
Is it some seaman, in whose ear  
Is ringing many a sound of fear,  
Who catches in the brooding gale  
Faint whisperings of woe and wail,  
And who would weave some mystic charm  
The coming tempest to disarm ?  
Alas ! no superstitious eye,  
Nursed in the lap of mystery ;  
But Leila from yon dreary deck  
Watches the fast receding light,  
Now, like a meteor, now a speck  
Lost in the starless shades of night.

And O what a rapture lights her view,  
As she sees it beaming brightly through !  
How she smiles till its restless rays are gone,  
Leaving her in her sadness floating on!

## XIV.

O, the billows may restlessly roll away,  
Bringing dreams of home to the gladsome and gay  
But ah ! they seem in their sadness to mourn  
O'er faded joys to the weary and worn :—  
So now they rock'd with their fetterless sweep,  
The seaman to rest, but the maiden to weep;  
While the chieftain but long'd for the dawn of day,  
Neither weeping nor dreaming the night away.

## XV.

And now they skirt through Harris' sound,  
North Uist ! thy laughing islets round ;  
Those islets which appear to smile,  
Wooring the wand'rer from the wave

To bask beneath their light awhile,  
Till winds and waters cease to rave.  
But no, they shun those treach'rous shores,  
And to the ocean fearless fly,  
Away from where the breaker roars,  
Till they have gain'd the cliffs of Skye.  
And there, beneath a softer sun,  
They glide across Arana bay,  
Thinking their dangers all are done,  
As on they sweep—away—away.

## XVI.

Kilmorry!<sup>s</sup> why upon thy coast  
Do now the fishers mingling meet?  
As though they fear'd some hostile host  
Dared to disturb their calm retreat:—  
But see!—no sign or show of fears,  
As now some distant sail they seek;  
And not, O not a trace of tears  
Bedims the merry maiden's cheek.

No—as they gaze across the seas,  
Far other things and thoughts than these  
Are crowding o'er each anxious breast,  
Bright thoughts that would not, could not rest.

## XVII.

But why such wistful wonderings,  
As ev'ry breeze soft music brings?  
'Tis but a chieftain's bark that floats  
In measure to the swelling notes.  
But O, there are whose happy hearts  
Are all so innocently gay,  
In which almost a rapture starts  
To see their own bright billows play—  
Hearts that can lightly leap with joy,  
At some strange sail upon the deep,  
Dear happiness, without alloy  
Of that which makes so many weep!

## XVIII.

But see !—what means yon mighty mass,  
    Flung wide across the eastern sky,  
As now Peppendill's peak they pass,  
    Their vessel plunging heavily ?  
And ah ! why does O'Clare now stand  
    To gaze upon the wilder'd water,  
Clasping so close the chilly hand  
    Of her, his own unhappy daughter ?  
O question him not,—nor wonder why  
    He breathes to himself that long word—never ;  
But mark the glance of his faded eye,  
    As he fears his hopes are lost for ever.

## XIX.

Hearken ! the storm with fearful force,  
    Is sweeping loud and awfully ;  
And how shall they maintain their course,  
    Or even drift on such a sea ?

Yet ev'ry swelling surge they brave,  
Still sweeping safely o'er, and then  
Sink deep into another wave,  
As though they ne'er could rise again ;—  
Billow and breaker driving past,  
Thinking each plunge would be the last,  
Till to a gulf their bark was driven,  
Where seas uplift their foam to heaven.

## XX.

And now from Staffa's sparkling spray,  
A drifting thing to Colonsay<sup>9</sup>  
Is fastly floating to the shore  
From whence it shall depart no more :—  
Perchance a mast or broken bark,  
At least some object dim and dark—  
So each believes upon the strand,  
So some with surer hearts declare,  
While all extend the eager hand  
To rescue life, if life be there.

## XXI.

It comes—but see no drifting wreck,  
Though here and there a bar is bent,  
Though billows lash the quiv'ring deck,  
Though ev'ry sail is rudely rent ;  
And still it sweeps in silence by,  
As proud of its own majesty ;  
Yet seems it somewhat weary now,  
For there a chieftain on its prow  
Stands waving high his haughty hand,  
Slight signal for his bark to land.  
A few more billows, and the skiff  
Is launch'd beneath a shelt'ring cliff—  
The vessel moor'd—where but the crew  
Remain to brave the tempest through :  
And see—the skiff has reach'd the shore,  
Its darings and its dangers o'er ;  
They land, and rest on Ulva's Isle,  
Till storms shall cease, and suns shall smile.

**KILDA'S BRIDAL.**

**CANTO FOURTH.**





# KILDA'S BRIDAL.

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## CANTO FOURTH.

### I.

IN Ulva's Isle there was a rock,  
And on that rock there was a Keep,  
Where, list'ning to the ocean's shock,  
Full many an eye has learnt to weep,  
That ne'er had wept before:  
But this was in another age,  
Now mingled with forgotten years,  
When tyranny and feudal rage  
Had made the time a time of tears;  
When ev'ry chieftain swore

His vassal serf should ever cling  
Through life unto his clan,  
Bereft of power, and ev'ry thing  
That made him feel—a man !

## II.

In Ulva's Isle there is a rock,  
And on that rock there is a Keep,  
Which, now deserted, seems to mock  
Both those who laugh, and those who weep :  
For there the maiden's merry laugh  
Has echo'd when tradition told  
How monks within that cell would quaff  
Their dizzy draught in cups of gold ;—  
And oft the passing pilgrim's feet  
Have trod that turret steep and strong,  
And musing in its calm retreat  
Has thought he heard the latest song  
Of her who pined, the last of those  
Who could not smile at others' woes.

And there full many a curious eye  
Has traced the lines upon the wall,  
Mementos of a day gone by,  
When man could fight for freedom's fall—  
Lines left that other times might weep  
Within that solitary keep.

## III.

Still, still it stands in faded glory,  
Telling its melancholy story  
Of captives, and the bale-fire's blaze,  
Of watchwords, and departed days ;—  
Departed! why that busy hum  
Of voices, and the clash of steel?  
And wherefore calls the distant drum  
Each warrior from his hasty meal?—  
Departed !—things that once had been !  
What meaneth then this martial scene ?

## IV.

Yes—many a warrior there is lining  
The limits of that rocky steep,  
And many a helmet there is shining  
O'er eyes that soon will have to weep  
The tears too deep for common sighing,  
For fall'n friends and comrades dying.—  
But see,—what means that sudden start,  
As each performs his practised part?  
And why that breathless pause?—that gaze  
As each essays his plume to raise?—  
They scarce can tell, but only know,  
They heard a rustling sound below—  
Some stone perchance, or but the roar  
Of billows breaking on the shore;—  
Again—again—and nearer still,  
'Tis past, and there a chieftain stands,  
Asking the Knight of Ulva's will  
From him, his page, whose gentle hands

Have come to lead the wand'rer's feet  
Away to some more fit retreat.

## V.

O warrior! sheathe again thy brand ;  
Though once, 'tis now no hostile hand  
On which a maiden gently leans,  
Heedless what all the murmur means.  
Again they turn their prying gaze  
Away to him whom each obeys,  
While he, the stranger, and the maid  
Still follow where their leader bade—  
That youthful leader in whose eye  
Were blended joy and sympathy.

## VI.

And now they reach the ancient hall,  
Unchallenged by the warder's call,  
And pass the dark and dreary door  
Whose gratings echo from the floor,

As though it were a lonely place,  
Haunted by those of evil race ;  
Where even at the noonday's hour,  
A man might quake with chilly fear,  
If but the shaking of a flow'r  
Fell softly on his startled ear.

## VII.

And well he might; for here and there  
Were scatter'd round the wrecks of war,  
Which once, ay once, were wielded for  
The smilings of a maid as fair  
As she who stood and trembled there.  
But on they pass, despite the chill  
Damp dread that darted o'er their brows,  
Through gallery and hall, until  
They reach the place where maiden's vows  
Have breathed beneath the soft moonlight—  
For love can only wake at night:

And there the maiden stays awhile ;  
And there the chieftain seems to smile—  
First gazing on the rocks below,  
Then onwards to the ocean's flow.

## VIII.

But moments fly, and twilight flings  
Her mantle o'er all earthly things ;—  
And Leila now has gone to rest,  
Dreaming herself a joyous child.

A joyous child !—oh no ! her breast,  
Sleeping or waking, ne'er is blest

By fleeting fancies half so mild :  
And he the chieftain stands again,

But not alone, where late he stood,  
And seems to stretch his gaze as then—

First on the fortress, then the flood :  
He stands !—but not alone—for see !

A stripling youth of tender age



Is watching how mysteriously  
He eyes himself, a simple page.

## IX.

But hark!—for sounds of converse low  
Are rising on the air;—  
Whence come they? From the crowd below?  
Or from that lonely pair?  
The crowd below are sunk in sleep;  
Some in the soldier's shed,  
And some in slumber scarce as deep,  
Upon a softer bed.  
Above, no taper's flick'ring flame  
Bespoke a sleepless eye,  
Save where the embers went and came  
At Leila's lattice high.  
Since slumber sinks above, around,  
On ev'ry weary head,  
From whence proceeds that lonely sound?  
From whence that lonely tread?

## X.

O 'tis the page's stifled speech,  
And 'tis the chieftain's tread ;—  
And list—he bids the stripling teach  
The truth of what he said.  
He asks the import of the scene  
He lately saw below,  
What all those martial ranks might mean,  
And why they wonder'd so  
To see a stranger and a maid,  
Who rather might have been afraid  
Than such a goodly row.

## XI.

“O Ulva's knight has captive been,”  
Answer'd the fearless boy,  
“For many a year, and well I ween  
Has tasted little joy ;  
Yes—he has seen the summers fly,  
And ate his lonely meal,

Too well, too strongly, guarded by

The freebooter Graystiel.

To-morrow—and he flies again

With all his vassals true,

Yes, even with that goodly train,

To make the ruffian rue.—

More of the story would'st thou know,

Come to the banquet room,

And there, besides my chieftain's wo,

I'll tell another's doom."

## XII.

Onwards they tread with stealthy pace,

More like a maiden's gentle grace

Than the bold stately step of those

Who oft before have faced their foes :

And now they pass the lone guard-room,—

"Hush!" said the page—"in proud array,

See Ulva's knight e'en in his plume

Sleeps ready for the break of day,—

Hush ! rouse him not till morning beams.

Ah ! little wakes from troubled dreams ! ”

## XIII.

Midnight has come, and through the tow'r

Chimes sleepily the solemn hour ;

Deserted is the banquet hall,

Upon its hearth no shadows fall

Save those which dying embers give,

Most playful as they cease to live.—

Deserted !—yes, short time ago

It was, but voices shrill and low

Alternate echo softly now,

As though some maid or lover's vow

Spoke words, fond, frighten'd words, too dear

By far for common ears to hear.

A lover's vow ! “ Yes, those may prate

Of love, who ne'er had aught to hate ”—

So mutter'd then a murmur deep,

From one who in his restless sleep

Had caught the whisperings that came,  
And blended them with woman's name.  
Woman ! are those thy tones that break  
The midnight silence ?—soldier ! wake—  
And learn thy error, thoughtless thing !  
And blush an injury to fling,  
E'en sleeping, 'gainst the gentle pow'r  
That hallows thy domestic hour.  
Wake from thy rude and restless trance !  
And through the jarr'd door gaze askance—  
And see thy chieftain's youthful page  
Talking with one of silv'ry age.

## XIV.

The chieftain and the youth were gazing  
Mutely out into the night,  
When they saw a head upraising  
From beneath a helmet bright ;  
Again it sought its martial pillow,  
Heedless whom or what it spied,

Dreaming only of the billow  
Raging round the mountain side.  
Then the little page returning  
Quickly to the kindling fire,  
Told his tale,—the stranger burning  
With a chieftain's haughty ire.

## XV.

“I've said the Knight of Ulva pined  
Though in a cell of state ;  
And so he did, for fetters bind  
The lowly and the great.  
Long time ago his bark was sweeping  
Idly across the main ;  
'Twas night, and he was calmly sleeping—  
When all, alas ! were ta'en !—  
Ta'en by a ruffian on the land,—  
A pirate on the sea,—  
One who was fear'd on ev'ry hand,  
And would have been by thee.

Graystiel, the freebooter, his name,  
    So sires to children taught,  
Though none knew when or whence he came,  
    But only that he sought  
With spoil from ev'ry foreign strand  
    To decorate his hall ;  
Both on the sea, and on the land,  
    The enemy of all.  
Away he bore the captive knight  
    To Ranag's island tower ; <sup>10</sup>  
And there for many a day and night,  
    And many a weary hour  
He made him see a tyrant's might,  
    And feel a tyrant's pow'r !

## XVI.

" Years sped away, nor need we know  
    How ev'ry moment pass'd ;  
Sufficient that on all below  
    He thought he'd look'd his last :—

When lo! another chieftain came  
Too near the tyrant's arm,  
With none to give the friendly flame,  
Or sound the loud alarm.  
Heedless of all, he wander'd on,  
Caparison'd in mail,  
But what of that? the word was gone—  
And even he must quail.

## XVII.

“ And quail he did, though when Graystiel  
First darted on his prey,  
The stranger made him deeply feel—  
The blow he could not stay.  
But e'er the brand he wielded back,  
Weary, alas! he fell,  
But rose again to the attack,  
And faced his foeman well;—  
When lo! the Knight of Ulva dash'd,  
Unmanacled and free,



Forth where the tyrant stood abash'd,  
As captive then as he.  
But O for words to tell the strife,  
The struggle that ensued—  
The stranger and the knight for life!  
The freebooter for blood!  
But why prolong?—with scarce a sigh  
The stranger bravely fell,  
And falling bade my chieftain fly,  
Breathing a last farewell.  
And fast, I ween, he flew away,  
And ne'er, I ween, he turn'd to stay,  
But only onward ran;  
For who could stand  
With single hand  
Against that mighty man?  
Know then, my lord, those warriors true,  
And know that Ulva's knight,  
Soon as the morning glimmers through,  
Prepare to take their flight,—

Away to Morven's mighty chain,  
    Away to Scar'bine's peak—<sup>11</sup>  
The sorrows of the chieftain slain,  
    And all their own to wreak!  
This is the story dark and dire"—  
    He said, and wiped a tear.  
"Now, may a lowly page enquire  
    What brought a stranger here?"

## XVIII.

"'Twas naught indeed, my little page,  
    That led a wand'rer here,  
Except the ocean's sudden rage  
    That drove his vessel near;  
Though we had all been long afraid  
    Our toss'd and trembling deck  
Would start ere human eye or aid  
    Could reach a drifting wreck.  
And there, in yonder shelter'd bay,  
    Our shatter'd bark is resting,

While many a one is far away  
Where billows are molesting.  
But when the sun shall sweetly smile  
Again upon the water,  
We must away from Ulva's isle,—  
For oh, my lovely daughter  
Is plighted to Lord Durie, and  
He'll wait and weep in sorrow—  
“Nay chieftain, nay! Lord Durie's hand  
No welcome waves to-morrow :—  
It is—indeed it is the same  
Whose fate Graystiel shall rue;  
O chieftain, 'tis the very name  
Of him the ruffian slew!  
And would'st thou know his lonely grave,  
And would thy daughter weep,  
He lies 'neath Ranag's chilly wave  
In unmolested sleep!”

## XIX.

No sigh escaped, no murmur falter'd  
Forth from the lips of Lord O'Clare ;  
But there he stood, each feature alter'd  
From deep delight to deep despair.  
Where were his hopes, and where his thought,  
In that mad moment of his mind ?  
He knew not, for he answer'd naught ;  
He saw not, for his eyes were blind—  
Were blind with those damp dews that creep,  
When tears refuse to dim their ray,  
To others wrapt in seeming sleep,  
In dreamless revery so deep  
That memory seems to lose her way  
In shadows where no light is guiding,  
Heavy mists and clouds of care,  
Flung round blighted hopes, dividing  
What they are from what they were !

•

## XX.

Thus many a minute fastly fled,  
Muttering what he wish'd unsaid ;  
For then he could not keep within  
The thoughts of recollected sin.—  
Hark! hark!—again he mutters low ;  
Alas ! what tears his spirit so ?  
“ De Grahame—yes, oh yes, I slew—  
His heir, and now he's slaughter'd too ;  
Wretch that I am ! ”

## Away—away—

Impatient for the dawn of day,  
He flies into the lone guard-room,  
Heedless of all the page can say ;  
Rushing along each rocky stair,  
Strew'd o'er with many a warrior's plume,  
And wakes the chieftain sleeping there—  
“ Lord Durie, O Lord Durie !—fly,  
Thou Knight of Ulva, instantly—

Go, 'venge his death, then be thy claim  
What I can give—what thou canst name ;  
Yes, e'en my lovely daughter's hand  
Shall, chieftain, be at thy command !”

## XXI.

Started the knight as though he saw  
A face, a form, he'd seen before ;  
What wonder that ? for fancies draw  
Strange things when sleep is scarcely o'er.  
He heard the charge—“ go, 'venge his death,”  
And softer words—“ a daughter's hand ;”  
Then with a loud and lordly breath  
The clarion blew, when ev'ry brand  
Uplifted like a forest rose,  
Prepared to face their fellest foes.

## XXII.

'Tis morn—'tis noon—and Ulva's tower  
Is still again as midnight's hour,

For Ulva's knight is on the seas,  
Spreading his canvass to the breeze;  
And Lord O'Clare has left the strand,  
Seeking again his native land.  
Yes, see him far on yonder bark—  
    Bending above his Leila there,  
As now they reach those mountains dark,  
    That cave, of yore old Fingal's lair;<sup>13</sup>  
And list, he whispers low of love,  
    And tells her all that fatal tale,  
While she but lifts her eyes above,  
    With brow as placid as 'twas pale.

## XXIII.

He tells her, too, of Ulva's knight,  
    Gone to avenge Lord Durie's death;  
And softly speaks of his delight  
    To see her weave a bridal wreath,  
To link her hand and his together  
    Whose blood for her would stain the heather

That blooms around Loch Ranag's wave,  
Libation fit for Durie's grave.

## XXIV.

She answers not—for what to her  
Was woman's fondest worshipper,  
Compared to him whose warm life-blood  
Once mingled with St Kilda's flood?  
What, what did it avail to whom  
Her sire might plight her bridal troth—  
For soon she'd bid farewell to both,  
And seek her bridal bed—the tomb?

## XXV.

And now they stem conflicting waves,  
Passing that lonely isle of graves,  
Iona<sup>13</sup>—where the mighty sleep,  
Lull'd by the music of the deep;  
And sweep their way through Mull's dark sound,  
'Tween ivy'd rocks with ruins crown'd.



And soon they gain those stately towers  
Which Leila left in childhood's hours,  
Sooner than Ulva's knight descried  
The mountain mainland from the tide.

## XXVI.

Few days had pass'd, when a fearless fleet  
Again were tracking their homeward way,  
Though none now tarry where waters meet  
'Tween Ulva's breakers and Colonsay ;  
Oh no ! for their chieftain's foremost prow  
Still onward points to another strand,  
And their's is the firm and faithful vow  
To guard him ever by sea or land.  
But who is he ? for on yonder bark  
He paceth proudly, and seems to mark  
Each object dim on the distant bay,  
Where the ripples dance, and the sunbeams play.  
'Tis the Knight of Ulva return'd from war ;  
Why wonder, then, if he gaze afar,

Watching the streamers all floating fair  
From his island tower and ev'ry where ?  
For his fiercest foe he has made to quail,  
    And on Ranag's isle  
    Left a crumbling pile,  
And a ruin'd keep to tell the tale.<sup>14</sup>

## XXVII.

On, on, they sail for many an hour,  
Till twilight dim begins to lower ;  
And now they sweep the Sound of Mull,  
Their snowy sails all fix'd and full ;—  
But hark ! for sounds of gladness fly  
    Forth from their chieftain's merry crew ;  
What mean they ? each with anxious eye  
    Landward extends his curious view.  
A shout ! a shout !—for Aros' halls  
    Are proudly peering from the strand ;  
See how their light on ocean falls—  
List how they ring to joyous calls !

Again, again ! He leaps to land,  
Their chieftain, as he waves his hand,  
Return'd by lord and lady there—  
By all, except the Maid of Clare.

## XXVIII.

Evening has come, and the minstrel's power  
Is sweetly charming the gentle hour.  
List, list ! for slow on the midnight air  
Is stealing a maiden's tearful prayer ;—  
Ah, Leila ! the voice is thine indeed !

The tears and the tones, all, all are thine !  
Alas, that a maiden's breast should bleed,  
When fortune's star seems again to shine !

## XXIX.

'Tis hush'd; and now the minstrel's notes  
Have ceased—within the bridal hall  
Not one soft breath of music floats,  
Not one soft whisper seems to fall—

Hark, hark! The Abbot comes—he stands  
Before yon altar's light alone,  
Waiting to link the hearts, the hands  
Of those alike unloved, unknown ;—  
Or if they e'er had met before,  
'Twas once when thirty chieftains swore  
Loudly within old Aros' halls  
Allegiance to her father's calls ;  
So Leila thought.—Hark, hark! again  
Echoes the minstrel's merry strain,  
Falls back the curtain's crimson fold,  
Dazzling the eye with gems of gold.  
They enter, he with stately pace,  
She with a maiden's gentle grace,  
But ah! with head bow'd down, and tresses  
Sleeping upon a snowy breast,  
Each deep-drawn throb of which confesses  
It is not, as it once was—blest.

## XXX.

Her hand the Knight of Ulva stole ;  
She lifts her eyes—" My soul ! my soul !  
Swoon not away ! Oh, do I see !  
"De Grahame ! do I gaze on thee ?  
Speak, speak !—oh, speak !"

“ Yes, yes, indeed

The same who loved thee dearly when  
Thy sire had left me long to bleed—

The same who pined away from men—

The same who saw that sire again  
Of late, and heard his charge to fly

Quickly away from Ulva's strand,  
To 'venge Lord Durie's death ; and I

Am now return'd to claim thy hand—  
Leila ! I have thy heart !"—

'Tis o'er,

And they have met who loved of yore ;

Yes, they are link'd in one again,

Who erst were link'd in Kilda's halls.

See yonder how they kneel as then,  
Just where the moonbeam meekly falls :  
And hear the aged father bless  
Them both in tones of tenderness,—  
His happy tears fast falling now  
On the maiden's breast, and the chieftain's brow.

## XXXI.

He speaks—the Lord O'Clare—"O hear—  
And, chieftain, say I'm but forgiven!  
Say, daughter, say—though many a tear  
I've cost thee—that I'm still as dear  
As once I and may the smile of heaven  
Rest on us through each after year."

"Forgiven ever! yes—oh yes!"  
They both exclaim, their eyes o'ercast  
With sadness that he linger'd yet  
On sights and scenes they'd soon forget;  
"Forgiven all!—this hour of bliss  
Is worth the years of sorrow past!"

They rise—and list the silver sound  
Of music echoing around,  
Stealing so softly ev'ry where  
As though it melted into air.

## XXXII.

## SONG.

When moonlight is smiling  
Upon the blue deep,  
And stars are beguiling  
The billows to sleep,—  
Then, then will we wander,  
Then, then will we roam,  
Till winds waft us yonder  
From ocean to home.

The notes died away, and 'twas still again,  
When another hand swept his minstrel strain  
With a gentler touch, and a sweeter tone,  
With a softer song that the heart might own.

## SONG.

Though the heart may be breaking,  
Joy comes after this ;  
And the deeper the aching,  
The deeper the bliss :—  
There's the sunshine of heaven,  
Though tempests may roll ;  
And when sorrow's far driven,  
Comes sunshine of soul.

## XXXIII.

Hush ! there's the splash of oars beneath,  
Deep in the little inland bay ;—  
And see ! a maid with bridal wreath  
Steps lightly where the ripples play,  
As though her heart were blest indeed,  
And ne'er knew what it was to bleed.  
And see ! a chieftain takes her hand,  
As light she leaps from off the strand ;  
Yes ! Ulva's knight, De Grahame now,  
Again prepares to point his prow



To his own isle, to guard his bride  
To where its mountains meet the tide.  
They sail—they sail far out of view,  
While music wafts a last adieu.

## XXXIV.

Farewell to thee, Leila ! Faint, faint is the lyre—  
Each note, as it trembles, bursts but to expire,  
To melt in the moonlight, to die on the waves,  
Or haply to echo in Mull's mighty caves ;  
Now still are its strains, yet salutings oft tell,  
They caught the last word, the long swelling farewell.  
Now naught but the blue sky undimm'd by a cloud,  
Hung wide o'er the waters their slumbers to shroud,  
To still and to soften the billow's rude force,  
Is hov'ring to guard, and to watch o'er thy course.  
And see how the bright gems all glittering there,  
Too lovely, too gentle for noontide's broad glare,  
Are stooping to shine from their azure-like thrones,  
Entranced by the stillness that wafts the gay tones.

Each star as it twinkles, each ray as it breaks,  
New lustres as bright from the ocean awakes,  
As though they were shower'd from an angel's blest hand,  
Or lit by the touch of a sea-spirit's wand,—  
So sweetly they sparkle, so gladly they dance,  
And over each helmet so gaily they glance.  
Farewell to thee, maiden—bold chieftain, farewell !  
No echo now trembles the music to tell  
That gladdens thy bark on its moonlighted way,  
Unrock'd by the ripple, unwash'd by the spray.



**NOTES**

**TO**

**KILDA'S BRIDAL.**



## NOTES.

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NOTE 1, p. 16.

*And hark ! there peals a chord, &c.*

THE charge of mysticism may perhaps be urged against this passage. When, however, the mind and the imagination are wrought to a point of excitement bordering upon distraction, what omens of good or evil may they not attach to the slightest incident, the gentlest whisper, or the softest sound ! At such times, what words may not fancy interpret in the very wail of the wind, or the flow of the ocean !

NOTE 2, p. 48.

*Whose circling mists still love to fold  
Their mantle round a clime so bold.*

Alluding to the frequent very dense mists which surround small islands, owing to their great exposure to the sea. This circumstance is thus remarked by Collins—

“Mona, once hid from those who search the main.”

“There is a tradition in the Isle of Man, that a mermaid, becoming enamoured of a young man of extraordinary beauty,

took an opportunity of meeting him one day as he walked on the shore, and opened her passion to him, but was received with a coldness, occasioned by his horror and surprise at her appearance. This, however, was so misconstrued by the sea-lady, that, in revenge for his treatment of her, she punished the whole island by covering it with a mist; so that all who attempted to carry on any commerce with it, either never arrived at it, but wandered up and down the sea, or were on a sudden wrecked upon its cliffs."

NOTE 3, p. 48.

*No Royal Wanderer on thy seas.*

During the Rebellion of 1745-46, the intrepid and talented Prince Charles wandered for some time with a few faithful adherents among these shores—many of the inhabitants of the Hebrides being still attached to his person and cause.

NOTE 4, p. 48.

*Nor can those shores now boast the name  
Link'd with that prince's hapless fame.*

"It was when hard pressed in South Uist, that Charles became indebted for his immediate preservation to Miss Flora MacDonald—a name which, according to the prediction of Dr Johnson, will live in history, and which no historian, it may be added, will ever mention without profound respect." When the Prince was about to leave Skye for the wild and sheltered island of Raasay, "he could not, without much agitation, bid farewell to that young lady, whose whole conduct, during the three days of their acquaintance, had been marked with so much

heroism and generous affection, and who, indeed, must have not only made the strongest impression upon his heart, but exalted his opinion of her sex, and of human nature. He embraced her in the tenderest manner, thanked her for her extraordinary services, and concluded by presenting to her a miniature of himself, which he desired that she would ever keep for his sake."

I cannot avoid extracting the following very interesting incident from the same work :—

"After the Prince had taken a tender farewell with Lady Kingsburgh, under whose roof he had been sheltered and treated with the greatest kindness, she went up stairs to his bedroom, and folded the sheets in which he had lain, declaring that they should never again be washed or used till her death, when they should be employed as her winding-sheet. She was afterwards induced to divide this valuable memorial of her distinguished guest with the amiable Flora, who, it may be mentioned, many years afterwards, carried her moiety of it to America. In the course of her strangely adventurous life, and though often reduced to situations of the greatest distress by the Republican insurgents, she never parted with it till the day of her death, when her body was wrapped in its precious folds, and consigned with it to the grave."

NOTE 5, p. 49.

*Now, at St Mary's holy well,  
No pilgrim lingers, &c. &c.*

"In 1827 there still lived an ancient adherent of the MacDonald family, who happened to be tending cattle near the house, in the island of Skye, at the time that Flora MacDonald passed



towards it from the shore, attended by her supposed servant. He was born in the same year with the Prince; was then, of course, twenty-six years of age; and in the year above mentioned, a hundred and seven. He remembered, he said, with as much distinctness as if the circumstance happened yesterday, seeing two women, one of them meanly, and the other finely dressed, approach him as he was sitting upon the hill-side. She who was finest in appearance, and also shortest in stature, asked him in Gaelic, if there was not a well in that neighbourhood. He answered that there was; and he immediately conducted the strangers to a spring, which, from its dedication to the Virgin, was called St Mary's Well. Here the tallest lady put her hand into her pocket, and pulled out a thing which looked at first like a little purse, but afterwards assumed the shape of a cup. This she dipped into the well, and, taking up a draught, presented it with an obeisance to the shortest and finest lady. That lady having satisfied her thirst, the tallest received back the cup, and proceeded to take a draught for herself. When she had also satisfied her thirst, she returned the cup to her pocket in its collapsed form, and taking out a shilling, presented it to the islander, who looked with wonder upon this mysterious and unusual scene, during the whole of which the tall lady never spoke. 'I had never before,' concluded the old man, 'been master of silver money, and I did not think the less of it because it was given to me by our dear Prince.'—*Rebellion in Scotland, 1745-1746. By Robert Chambers.*

## NOTE 6, p. 69.

. . . *the music might be but the convent bell.*

The sound of bells across the water, at so great a distance, is by no means a mere poetical exaggeration. A remarkable instance of this kind is related by Dr Arnott:—"It happened one day on board a ship sailing along the coast of Brazil, far out of sight of land, that the persons walking on deck, when passing a particular spot, heard very distinctly, during an hour or two, the sound of bells, varying as in human rejoicings. All on board came to listen, and were convinced, but the phenomenon was most mysterious. Months afterwards it was ascertained, that at the time of observation, the bells of the city of St Salvador, on the Brazilian coast, had been ringing on the occasion of a festival: their sound, therefore, favoured by a gentle wind, had travelled over perhaps a hundred miles of smooth water, and had been brought to a focus by the concave sail in the particular situation on the deck where it was listened to."

## NOTE 7, p. 72.

The figures used in this song are taken from an article entitled "The Broken Heart" in the Sketch Book.

"As the dove will clasp its wings to its side, and cover and conceal the arrow that is preying on its vitals, so it is the nature of woman to hide from the world the pangs of wounded affection.

\*                      \*                      \*                      \*

"She is like some tender tree, the pride and beauty of the grove; graceful in its form, bright in its foliage, but with the

worm preying at its heart. We find it suddenly withering, when it should be most fresh and luxuriant. We see it drooping its branches to the earth, and shedding leaf by leaf; until, wasted and perished away, it falls even in the stillness of the forest; and, as we muse over the beautiful ruin, we strive in vain to recollect the blast or thunderbolt that could have smitten it with decay."

NOTE 8, p. 82.

*Kilmorry ! why upon thy coast*

*Do now the fishers mingling meet ?*

There being two villages of the same name, one in the island of Arran, the other in that of Scarba, it may be as well to say that the allusion here is to neither of these, (of course it could not be to the former,) but to Kilmorry in the island of Rum. On observation, however, it will be seen that there is a difference in the mode of spelling one of the three places: that in Arran being Kilmory, the other two both Kilmorry.

Synonymous names for different localities seem not unfrequent among the Western Islands of Scotland; there being

Kilbride, village in South Uist,

Kilbride, do. in Arran.

Ben More, mountains 3168 ft., island of Mull.

Ben More, do. 2310 ft., island of Rum.

Kildonan, village in South Uist.

Kildonan, do. in the island of Eigg.

Harris, island south of Lewis.

Harris, village in the island of Rum.

Longa, island west of Ross.

Longa, do. east of Skye.

Oronsay, island north of Islay.

Oronsa, very small island west of Skye.

Pabbay, island in the sound of Harris.

Pabay, small do. west of Skye.

It will be seen that the last two examples are not altogether spelled alike in both instances, though nearly so. Doubtless with very little trouble many others might be given: these, however, may suffice here.

NOTE 9, p. 85.

. . . *from Staffa's sparkling spray,  
A drifting thing to Colonsay  
Is fastly floating to the shore.*

Another example of the redundancy of names mentioned in the previous note; the allusion here being to Colonsay, a very small island immediately south-west of Ulva, between that island and Staffa; and not to a much larger one, also named Colonsay, to the north of Islay, and west of Jura.

NOTE 10, p. 102.

*Away he bore the captive knight  
To Ranag's island tower.*

As was stated in the Preface, this canto is somewhat founded upon tradition.

"In a beautiful valley in the Highlands of Caithness, lies embosomed a small mountain tarn, called the Loch of Ranag. According to the legend, "the last proprietor of the fortalice there situated was a noted freebooter of the name of Graystiel, who kept the whole country in alarm by his predatory incursions, from the Ord to Duncansbay Head."

## NOTE 11, p. 105.

*Away to Morven's mighty chain,  
Away to Scar'bine's peak.*

"The hill of Bencheildt, which ascends abruptly from the water's edge, protects the Loch of Ranag on the north. On the south, it is overlooked by a chain of lofty mountains, individually named Scarabine, Morven, and the Pap, which form a natural barrier betwixt Sutherland and Caithness."

## NOTE 12, p. 110.

*That cave, of yore old Fingal's lair.*

Fingal—a monster, who, according to tradition, dwelt within the wonderful and sublime cavern of Staffa.

"The victor sea-king, while his homeward sail  
Woo'd to its swelling breast the northern gale,  
Yet stay'd his falcon flight to gaze awhile  
On those fair cliffs, and that mysterious isle,  
Where dwelt for aye, enchain'd within his cave,  
The spellbound demon of the tortured wave,

Whose frantic moanings oft were heard to swell  
The storm, within whose breast he loved to dwell.

Approach and enter; where thou treadest now  
The Celt has trode before thee, and his brow  
Was raised, as thine is, with enquiring gaze,  
Towards the silent pile of other days.  
To him it was no solitude—his eye  
Call'd into life each shape of fantasy;  
He saw great Fingal, with unecho'd pace,  
Stalk wildly o'er his spirit's dwelling-place."

*From Blackwood's Magazine for October 1832.*

NOTE 13, p. 111.

*Passing that lonely isle of graves,  
Iona—where the mighty sleep,  
Lull'd by the music of the deep.*

The island of Iona, or Icolmkill—the latter name being given to it in memory of St Columba—has a kind of sacred charm about it, owing to its many ancient graves and time-worn ruins. It was once emphatically the resting-place of the great.

"St Oran's burying-place is a large enclosure, in which, according to the Dean of the Isles, the Kings of Scotland, Ireland, and Norway, had separate cemeteries.

"Most families of distinction in the Highlands had burying-places here."

NOTE 14, p. 113.

*And on Ranag's isle*

*Left a crumbling pile,*

*And a ruin'd keep to tell the tale.*

“Near the north edge of the loch, there is a small island, on which may be still seen the ruins of an old keep or castle.”

**MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.**





## POEMS.

---

### TAKING THE VEIL.

. . . "her lovely cheek is now  
On her hard pillow—there, alas! to be  
Nightly, through many and many a dreary hour,  
Wan, often wet with tears."

ROGERS.

#### I.

THE matins are done, the pray'rs are said,  
And the priest hath left his lonely bed,  
And paceth about the convent hall,  
While the streaks of daylight gild the wall.  
And never he seems to look around ;  
But, gazing still on the sacred ground,  
He silently paceth, all alone,  
O'er marble flag and sepulchral stone.

## II.

On what is he musing all the while,  
That now he can weep, and now can smile ?  
Are his thoughts in heaven, away, away ?  
Or cling they still to the things of clay ?  
Oh ! ask him not, for he dare not tell,  
But softly list to the solemn bell,  
And know that a maiden, young and fair,  
Is going to join the sisters there.

## III.

The moment hath come, and now the toll  
More like the dirge of the dead doth roll ;  
And see ! at yon distant, dazzling light  
Moves a lovely form, all robed in white,  
With taper burning, and crown of flow'rs,  
Just pluck'd from the convent's fairest bow'rs ;  
And now she raiseth her beauteous eyes  
Away from earth to the smiling skies.

IV.

And, ah ! they whisper that azure smile  
Is all for her and the sacred pile  
'Neath which she bends her innocent head,  
Swearing to live as though she were dead.  
But fainter now is the doleful peal,  
For its cheerless chime can scarcely steal  
In echo along the silent vale,  
Or softly sigh on the gentle gale.

V.

She kneels ; and still as the midnight hour,  
The bell is hush'd in the ancient tower :  
Not one lone sound on the ear may fall,  
Save the slow tread in the convent hall.  
Deluded creature ! Deceitful show !  
To bind to the cell of gloomy woe  
A trusting spirit, a stainless heart ;—  
But hasten, O priest ! to play thy part.

## .VI.

He enters ; and now those lovely eyes  
Are gazing on him ; those knees arise—  
And meet him, with taper burning bright,  
Flinging its ray on those robes of white.  
She renders the vow ; and then, ah ! then,  
Raising her eyes, and kneeling again,  
She calls upon heaven and earth to seal  
The fate she must soon too deeply feel.

## VII.

But hearken ! what music steals along,  
Too softly sweet for an earthly song,  
As it swells through fretted aisle and hall,  
Where rarely a sunbeam dares to fall ?  
Such music as seems to melt away,  
Like twilight shades at the dawn of day ;  
Such music as seems to waft each prayer  
Of the maid who kneels so fondly there.

## VIII.

But now it hath ceased—and, one by one,  
The sisters embrace their sister nun ;  
And again the lonely convent hall  
Hears the vow she can never recall ;  
And, flinging aside the crown of flowers,  
Which fades away in a few short hours,  
They robe her now in the gloomy vest,  
With rosary round her snowy breast.

## IX.

'Tis said, 'tis done!—and the long farewell  
To all that with joy the heart can swell  
Must falter now,—while the heaving sigh  
For a moment dims her steadfast eye,  
Ere she seeks her lone and gloomy cell,  
In silence and prayer her beads to tell :  
And can, O ! can such a life as this  
Be the dark and dreary way to bliss ?

## X.

'Tis past ! and again the sunset rays  
Fall as they did in earlier days ;  
But not with the playful smiles they wore,  
And not with the joys they brought before ;  
For now they beam on a place of gloom,  
Where, like a lonely thing of the tomb,  
Her cheek owns many a trickling tear,  
For she's lost to life and all that's dear.

## MONODY

ON THE DEATH OF THOMAS CAMPBELL, ESQ.

---

CAMPBELL ! could I but climb where thou art gone ;  
Could I but feel like thee while gazing on  
Life's weary waste—if, in that world of bliss,  
The soul takes aught of interest in this ;  
Could I but see the happy spirits there,  
Who feel no sorrow, never dream of care ;  
And could I catch the softest, faintest swell  
Of music, such as tongue may never tell,  
As it peals ever from each golden lyre,  
By angel-fingers swept, that never tire ;  
Could I one minute leave all sorrow here,  
And breathe the air unmarr'd by sorrow's tear :



O ! if thou could'st, I'd bid thee tell the worth  
Of hope's best pleasures when indulged on earth,  
Compared with that eternity of joy,  
When hope is lost in sight, and love is mind's employ.

Think not that there is naught of memory  
On which the heart may still rest joyously :  
O yes ! the deathless flowers shall ever bloom,  
Which thou hast pluck'd, around their master's tomb ;  
Fair flowers of poesy, that flourish on,  
Undying and undimm'd, though thou art gone.  
And now, farewell ! thy harp is hush'd and still ;  
And who may hope such notes again to fill ?  
Where is the soul, the kindling soul, that can  
So eloquently sing the world's " last man ? "  
And where the hand that can such trophies raise  
To deck the warrior's brow, or tell the praise  
Of those who yearn beneath oppression's yoke,  
And rise, indignant rise, for freedom's stroke ?

Fair Mull ! let thy dark pines and laurels weep,  
And let thy billows roll themselves to sleep ;  
Be hush'd ye gales that sweep along her tide,  
Nor let your echoes reach the mountain side :  
O ! be that lovely isle the last, the first,  
To drop the heart-felt tear for him whose youth she nursed.

NOTE TO THE MONODY.

---

*Fair Mull! let thy dark pines and laurels weep.*

THE poet spent some of his early years, as a tutor in a private family, in the island of Mull, where, doubtless, his imagination luxuriated in the sublime scenery by which he was surrounded. "The Pleasures of Hope" was partly written whilst resident there.

## SONG.

OH, COULD I HEAR THAT VOICE AGAIN!

---

### I.

OH, could I hear that voice again!  
    Could I but list its music now,  
As once I heard its softness, when  
    It sung to calm this troubled brow!

### II.

Then, then this heart would beat as free,  
    Responsive to the gentle lay,  
And I should smile as merrily  
    As once I did when life was gay.

## III.

There was ! O yes ! there was a time  
When life was spent alone with thee ;  
Till, soaring to a fairer clime,  
How dark that life was left to me !

## • IV.

That voice, that lovely voice, is gone,  
Too gentle for a world like this ;  
But, oh ! 'tis ever singing on,  
Far sweeter, in a world of bliss !

## V.

I may not—would not—call thee back,  
Bright spirit of a happier clime,  
One hour to leave thy angel track :  
Forgive the thought, if it be crime !

## VI.

Sing on, sing on without a tear,  
Beyond the flight of mortal care ;  
Though sweet to list such music here,  
Sweeter to think thee singing there.

## MUSINGS.

                  . . . . . "To the sand  
The little billows hastening silently,  
Came sparkling on, in many a gladsome band,  
Soon as they touch'd the shore, all doom'd to die!"

PROFESSOR WILSON.

---

### I.

WHEN twilight shades are stealing  
Across the summer sea,  
And moonlight is revealing  
Its beauty silently—  
How sweet it is to listen,  
Upon the lonely shore,  
To ripples as they glisten  
Each moment more and more.

## II.

What music in each billow!  
What rapture in each wave!  
Alas! that, like the willow,  
They weep o'er many a grave!  
But these shall sing their dirges,  
When trees have died away,  
In melancholy surges  
Of never-ceasing play.

## III.

O yes! thou faithful ocean,  
Whose wild notes never die;  
Whose everlasting motion  
Seems like affection's sigh—  
Thy waves are ever roaring  
The music of the sea,  
As though their fate deploring  
Who find their tomb in thee.

## IV.

Full many a one is sweeping  
Gaily across the main,  
'Neath which eyelids are sleeping  
Which ne'er shall ache again ;  
Yet little do they ever  
Remember those who rest  
So far beneath, where never  
A pang shall wound the breast.

## V.

Roll on in sounds of sadness,  
Thou melancholy sea !  
For many a hope of gladness  
Lies deep entomb'd in thee :  
And ye, whose knells are tolling  
In billows as they fall,  
Sleep on, till, backward rolling,  
The sea restores you all.



## **S O N G.**

### **WHERE'S THE BREAST ?**

---

#### **L**

**WHERE's the breast of snowy whiteness**

**Can, my love, compare with thine,**

**And the eye of sunny brightness**

**That can e'er so sweetly shine ?**

**Where the glance so softly smiling,**

**E'en though tears bedim its light,**

**Like some syren form beguiling**

**Mortal's soul with fond delight ?**

## II.

Where the love and where the gladness  
That so gently mingle there,  
As though grief and lonely sadness  
Would not mar a thing so fair ?  
Where the voice such music lending,  
Till it seems almost divine,  
And the heart, such softness blending,  
That can ever love like thine ?

## FAREWELL!

"Farewell! a word that must be, and hath been—  
A sound which makes us linger;—yet—farewell!"

CHILDE HAROLD.

---

### I.

WHY standeth a mortal weeping there,  
By that lonely vessel's side?  
Why doth he seem such a man of care,  
As he lists the sullen tide?  
Oh, it is not that he sighs to see  
The child on the distant shore  
To the billows dance so merrily,  
While he is a child no more:  
But his weary eye grows dim with tears,  
And deep is his bosom's swell,  
As he leaves that land for many years,  
As he breathes that word—farewell!

## II.

And why is that stripling boy so sad,  
And his youthful step so slow,  
And that eye now dim which beam'd so glad  
But a few short hours ago ?  
Oh ! why is he gazing tearfully,  
While his mother's gentle hand  
Is laid on his head so prayerfully,  
Ere he leaves his native land ?  
Though the restless sea is ever dear,  
Yet he feels what none can tell,  
As he sees that mother's parting tear,  
As he sobs that word—farewell !

## III.

Why is that radiant brow so pale,  
And that maiden form so changed ?  
And why doth her heart now seem to fail,  
As from all its hopes estranged ?  
Oh, it is not that those hopes are gone—  
That their light is fainter now ;

No, no, they are burning brightly on  
The shrine of her youthful vow :—  
But far in the depths of her young heart,  
Works a deep and untold spell,  
As she sees one treasured form depart,  
As she sighs that word—farewell !

## IV.

Where, where is the soul that loves at all—  
And where is the laughing eye—  
That never hath felt the tear-drop fall,  
Or melt away in a sigh ?  
That never hath seen a loved one go,  
With long and lingering gaze ?  
That never hath felt a pang of wo,  
When it thought of other days ?  
Oh ! where is the breast that doth not feel,  
And the heart that cannot tell—  
The sighs that breathe, and the tears that steal,  
In the lonely word—farewell ?

## STANZAS TO A LADY.

---

### I.

THOU art gone !—and this heart, it is dreary and lone ;  
For the visions that bless'd it too early are flown—  
As the tints of the sunset fast fade in the skies,  
As the raptures of mortals soon melt into sighs.  
That voice, like the bird that oft charms with its lay  
The spirit from sadness, then flutters away,  
Is gone, and its echoes alone I may hear—  
Those echoes, so fondly, so sacredly dear.

## II.

Thou art gone !—and may blessings attend thee where'er  
Thy pilgrimage path, and may never a care  
Blight a spirit so pure and so joyous as thine ;  
Oh ! smooth be thy pathway, whatever be mine.  
Those soft gentle eyes upon others now beam,  
And the joys they imparted have fled like a dream ;  
They are gone—they are gone ! but their sweetness  
shall last  
While memory can point to the days that are past.

SONG.

OH, WEAVE THAT SPELL!

---

I.

Oh, weave that spell yet once again,  
And twine that wreath for me!  
Oh, bathe this beating brow, and then  
I'll fondly dream of thee!

II.

I'll dash away the trembling tear  
That long has dimm'd my eye,  
And even think again I hear  
That soft voice laughing nigh.



## III.

I'll dream thou could'st not spurn away  
What once was loved so well,  
That thou could'st never lightly say  
That cruel word—farewell!

## IV.

O yes! this lone, this doating soul,  
By some blest charm beguiled,  
Shall feel the joy that o'er it stole  
When once its loved one smiled.

## V.

But ah! it starts to life again,  
To know that thou art gone—  
That summer suns may smile and wane  
While it must still weep on.

## VI.

Though storms may blight the cherish'd flower,  
Where first, where last we met,  
Yet think not in one little hour  
This spirit can forget.

## VII.

O, weave that spell yet once again,  
And twine that wreath for me!  
O, bathe this beating brow, and then  
I'll fondly dream of thee!

## THE DOVE'S FIRST RETURN.

---

### I.

THERE was a time, fond faithful bird ! when thou wert wandering

Across a world of waters, like a lost and lonely thing—

When e'en to thee the evening brought no loved and leafy  
home,

For then the mighty deep was but a mighty catacomb.

### II.

Ah ! then chaotic silence brooded fearfully around,

For hush'd into a solemn sleep was every human sound ;

Naught but the water's murmurings, when darkness seem'd  
to lower,  
Disturb'd the sacred solitude of such an awful hour.

## III.

But hark! was that a living thing that hover'd in the air?  
O yes!—'twas but a gentle dove that faintly flutter'd there,  
That flew unto the welcome Ark, no olive leaf to bring,  
For she could find no resting-place to stoop her weary wing.

## FIRST LOVE.

---

### I.

" O MOTHER ! mother ! tell me—  
What means that wicked word ?  
For oh, he always calls me  
His own, his lovely bird !

### II.

" And then he says how dreary  
His life must ever be,  
And how his days must darken  
If spent away from me.

## III.

“ And oh ! he seems so happy  
Throughout the fleeting day,  
Whene'er my voice is near him,  
As though *I* made him gay.”

## IV.

“ Hush, daughter ! hush such speaking,  
Or he will only smile ;  
And when you are believing,  
Will laugh at you the while.”

## V.

“ Nay, mother, once you told me—  
All these were wicked things,  
That ever brought deceiving,  
And only planted stings.”—

## VI.

“ No more of this, I pray you,  
But get your book and read—  
For if you but believe him,  
He'll laugh at you indeed.”

## VII.

“Nay, nay, he is in earnest !

He whisper’d in my ear  
So softly when we parted,  
And even shed a tear.

## VIII.

“O mother ! is it sinning ?

I do, I do love you,—  
But I will love you dearer,  
If I may love *him* too.”

## THE SERENADE.

---

'Twas evening—and the summer sky  
Was gathering despondingly,  
With here and there a speck of blue,  
Still to Italia's sunset true—  
When at a fair Venetian bower  
There sat a maid at twilight hour ;  
And, gazing on the frowning sky,  
She felt a trickling tear—  
For oh ! she thought of hopes gone by,  
Of hopes too blindly dear.

\* \* \* \*



"But hark! what falls upon the ear?  
Is that low strain a mortal's song?"  
Thus spoke an aged gondolier  
To a bold youth he bore along.  
"'Tis gone!"—the youthful noble cried—  
His features flush'd with manly pride.  
"List!—now I hear those notes again,  
As gentle as they sounded then."

## SONG.

## I.

O wayward melancholy!  
How I love the very sound!  
What can it be but folly  
To dance a merry round!

## II.

To dance a merry round—  
When my love is far away,  
From the ripples as they bound  
Against his palace gray.

There was a pause, a silent pause,  
No measured tones fill'd up the clause,  
When he, that youth, with trembling hand,  
Which erst had grasp'd a soldier's brand  
    Unfalt'ring and unmoved,  
Swept quickly o'er his sweet guitar,  
Which long had lain unswept, while far  
    From her so dearly loved.

## SERENADE.

## I.

There is a time when the lonely soul  
    Can sigh itself to rest,  
As a tired sea-bird can calmly sleep  
    On the ocean's stormy breast:  
    And can it be  
    That you sigh for me,  
Like a bird for land on the restless sea?

## II.

There is a time when the lonely soul  
Awakes again to bliss,  
When it meets, as from another world,  
What it long has sought in this :  
And can it be  
That for you and me,  
Fond maiden! there waits such an ecstasy!

\* \* \* \* \*

The bells are merry in Adria's isles,  
And the morn has broke in southern smiles,  
And a gondola now sweeps along,  
Through the blue waves and a bridal throng,  
With a noble youth and blushing maid ;  
And now all their dearest vows are paid.  
They parted, and now have met again ;  
And long ere the moon began to wane,  
Oh, they were link'd in a holy tie—  
While the maiden thinks of the passer-by  
Who caught her song and her lonely sigh.

Said the noble youth—" We'll ne'er forget  
The hour we parted, the hour we met ;  
O yes ! we'll think of the long farewell  
Which in tears we silently bade ;  
And think of the merry bridal bell,  
Of the song, and the serenade."

## A WINTER SONG.

---

### I.

OH, chilly blows the winter blast,  
And chilly sweeps the snow !  
Well,—let it drive and dance about,  
And let the breezes blow ;  
We'll draw around the merry hearth,  
And, as the shadows fly,  
We'll waft a wish to those we love,  
And talk of days gone by.

## II.

We'll tell of all the happy things,  
When every fleeting day  
Brought pleasures that we vainly thought  
Would never pass away ;  
And as we hear the wintry wind  
Make music in the sky,  
We'll waft a wish to those we love,  
And talk of days gone by.

## SONNET.

---

THERE is a time, oh yes, I know it well !

When something like oblivion flings its shade

Upon the dark, dark past—while fancies fade,

And flit and dance like some wild fairy spell

Before the brain, the visionary brain.

Such times are those when moonlight's restless ray

Sleeps on the sea, like ocean's milky way ;

While some frail bark, its white sails spread in vain,

Sleeps gently, too, upon the tranquil tide :

Such times are those when, at lone midnight's hour,

The soul is lull'd by music's melting power—

Entranced, as it floats from that vessel's side.—

\* \* \* \* \*

The spirit tires—the vision fails—and then

How memory starts to wake to life again !

SONG.

AWAY, AWAY, THOU DEAR ONE!

---

I.

AWAY, away, thou dear one!

Nor fondly vow to me;

And I will ne'er remember

I once could vow to thee;—

Once—when the tears I cherish'd

Thou only could'st allay;

Again if they come o'er me,

I'll bid them all—away!



## II.

Away, away, thou false one !.

Nor win and wound the breast  
That now is almost broken,

Though yesterday so blest.  
Go!—for the thoughts are faded,

The thoughts I would not stay ;  
Again if they come o'er me,

I'll bid them all—away !

## OCEAN'S MUSIC.

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### I.

OH, what a dark and trackless tide  
Rolls round in restless pomp and pride  
Creation's sunny shore !  
A tide that ever sweetly sings  
Of many, many happy things  
That are no more :—

### II.

A tide that ever rolls along  
In one eternal solemn song  
Of mighty minstrelsy :—  
Sometimes in sounds so softly sweet,  
That winds and waters seem to meet  
In melody :

## III.

Sometimes a sullen ceaseless roar,  
When billows loudly lash the shore,  
And seem to sing of death ;  
When wildest breezes float around,  
Wafting the long last lonely sound  
Of beauty's breath.

## IV.

But soon such surges sweetly cease  
And dance again in pristine peace,  
Like summer's silvery sea ;  
And through the long and lovely day,  
As though their joy would ne'er decay,  
Sing merrily.

## MY EARLY DAYS.

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### I.

O SAY, do ye ask me if there be  
Ever a bright spot in memory,  
Where thought may linger and rest awhile  
'Neath faded pleasure's reflected smile?—

### II.

Ask ye if ever the soft sunlight  
Of joy may fall on a mortal's sight,  
Chasing away with its blissful beams  
The sorrowful shades of earthly dreams?

## III.

'Tis the spot all wet with human tears,  
Where memory points to youthful years;  
Where, like an angel, she seems to fly,  
Robed in the radiance of things gone by.

## IV.

And oh ! the light that falls on the heart,  
Leaving in shadow its baser part,—  
The light that illumines what time decays,  
Is that which shines round my early days!

THE END.

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